

IN QUEST OF YESTERDAY A HISTORY OF HALIBURTON

by NILA REYNOLDS

(COPYRIGHTED)

Thirty-Third Instalment THE MINDEN STORY Chapter 11

Looking at the Gull River as it has been during the winter of 1960-61 it is hard to believe that its ice was once the arena for thrilling horse races.

By the 1890's every sporting minded gentleman who could afford it kept a fast driving horse. What the high speed convertible is to the young man about town of the 1960's, the thoroughbred driver, with its smartly turned out cutter and bugie was to the young blades of the gay '90's. In those days a man's prestige was apt to be measured by the size of his watch (some of them weighed half a pound), the speed of his driver, the ornateness of its harness and the model of his cutter.

In the latter regard the Minden Echo of November 27, 1884, carried the following flowery comments: "Enterprising—Some weeks ago we mentioned that Mr. John Welch had made an advent into the village with the first fall of snow bringing with him a load of cutters for the winter. Now John is an enterprising citizen and has followed up his determinations to turn out nice work by procuring the services of Mr. John Moore, late of Barrie, who is an adept in the art of handling the painter's pencil and is making Welch's cutters look more than handsome. We trust Mr. Welch will obtain ready sale for his nobby cutters."

The harness and accoutrements were probably purchased from Alfred Palmer for the same Echo carries the following advertisement which shows that business men of the day were more than familiar with sales techniques and advertising appeal: "Harness! Harness!! Harness!!! Having opened a new harness shop in the Brick Block in the village of Minden, and having had considerable experience in the manufacture of Harness, we are able

to make it in all styles at the lowest possible prices. A good stock of collars and Made-Up Harness will always be kept in stock. Curry combs, brushes and all Saddler's Sundries constantly on hand. Farmers will kindly accept this intimation and leave their orders with us for anything they want in this line. Repairs promptly and carefully done."

During the summer months horse racing in all its variations was universally popular. When the frosts of the winter of 1895 became so severe that the river ice grey thick enough to support a horse and cutter, its possibilities suggested a perfect place to try the speed of their steeds.

Among the owners of notoriously fast horses were Alec Austin, (connected by marriage to the Bucks) and Jack Dickson whose family owned the Basil Hewitt place and specialized in well bred livestock of all sorts. In spite of their swift gate and handsome appearance, these fine runners were finally outclassed by an unlikely looking nag owned by Bob McKelvey which answered to the name of "Step and Fetch It."

Spavined on both hind legs, long in the gear and unwieldy of contour, "Step and Fetch It," relaxing at the starting post, looked like an immediate candidate for the glue factory. He was always left far behind by the others at the start of the contest and no one, judging by his looks, could believe that he would even reach the finishing post. For a long time McKelvey made a lot of easy money out of the unwary who based their bets on appearance only.

It took old Step and Fetch a few rods to hit his stride but once he got warmed up he could show his snowy heels to anything with a mane and tail in the whole district. To the complete disgust of all the horse breeders who loved the fine lines and graceful build of a thoroughbred animal, the longer the race the faster the misproportioned Step and Fetch It, cutter bells jingling and shedding clouds of snow

and glory traveled. There have been handsomer horses in the county and more famous horses who won laurels for their owner, but for sheer heart old Step and Fetch It belonged in the winner's circle of all time.

Like most pioneer communities, the Minden area abounds in horse stories grave and gay. One of the best concerns a dark bay driver called Mike whose unerring instinct three Minden men owed their lives.

It happened during the 1920's when Mike's owner, employed on the Gull River company's drive, was camped at Burn's eddy up stream from Minden. One June evening Mike's master and two friends attended a dance some distance from the driver's camp. During the festivities, a flash thunder storm came up dumping tons of water on the area. It turned the generally placid Gull River, already overflowing its banks with the water reserved to carry off the log drive, into a surging torrent which washed out a portion of the portage bridge on the north side of the river.

By the time the party adjourned, the storm had abated. Although it was as dark as the proverbial pitch, Mike, always eager for his master's "giddy up," made good time on his way back to Burn's eddy until his sudden halt before the portage bridge jolted his half sleeping passengers into wakefulness.

Disgusted at the delay, the driver ordered the horse to go forward. Mike remained steadfast, refusing to budge an inch even at the stinging application of the lash. Realizing at last that there was something amiss, one of the men struck a match. Its feeble flame revealed, not solid bridge timbers, but a yawning chasm through which the boiling flood waters faced. Another length of the buggie would have plunged the three men to their doom in the raging river. Mike certainly earned his oats that night!

Minden village in the early years had special accommodations for visit-

ing horse owners. Like the towns of the old west, a series of hitching posts lined either side of the main street. During a spring flood in the 1870's the street was covered by water to such a depth that Mrs. Dan McIntyre (Aunt Mary), who paddled to Minden from Boskung to do her shopping, was able to tie up her canoe at the hitching posts usually reserved exclusively for horses.

Alas for those spirited little thoroughbreds. Although farm horses are still in use, the only saddle horses or drivers passing through Minden today are either mounts from the local riding stables and summer camps or show animals enroute to Minden's agricultural fair which, inaugurated around 1864, is older than the Canadian National Exhibition.

The satisfying jangle of harness, accompanied by the whirr of swiftly revolving buggie wheels, and the musical tinkle of sleigh bells which echoed like fairy chimes on the frosty air whenever the family driver was hitched to the cutter, are restricted forever to memory's ears. Winter travel in an adequately heated automobile may be more comfortable, but no car horn, be it installed in a Cadillac or Rolls-Royce can ever replace the bewitching harmony of a good set of cutter bells on the harness of a fast driver.

Ice skating on the river was also a popular sport. When the river did not freeze solid enough to permit such activities, the town fathers hitched up their sleighs and hauled water from the river in barrels which were dumped on the outdoor rink in Dickson's field.

It was inevitable that a village, which in the 1890's went to such laborious lengths to provide an ice surface for their young people's pleasure, should in more progressive and prosperous times build a community arena and sponsor a hockey team of the calibre of the Minden Monarchs.

(Continued next week)

Hi-Lights from the Hi

On Saturday, February 18, the junior basketball tournament was held at Haliburton. Teams journeyed to Haliburton from Bancroft, Fenelon Falls and Lakefield. Haliburton defeated Bancroft 21-10. Gloria Harrison was high scorer for the game with eight points.

In the second game Haliburton won a close decision with Lakefield, the score being 17-15. Cheryl Walker was high scorer for the game with 12 points.

In the third game Haliburton was again on the winning side when they defeated Fenelon Falls 25-19. High scorer for the game was Gloria Harrison with 14 points.

High scorers for the day were Gloria Harrison with 28 points and Cheryl Walker with 27 points.

Haliburton are the champions from the district meet.

Congratulations is extended to the members of the team on their fine showing of athletic ability and sportsmanship.

Inter-mural basketball games which have been played are as follows: 11A defeated 12 with a score of 10-4; 12 defeated 11B by 7-1; 11A defeated 13 by 13-8.

On February 18 the junior boys traveled to Bancroft with three cheerleaders. The first game saw Haliburton in action against Bancroft, but then Bancroft won the game 40-17.

The second game was played and once more Haliburton lost—this time to Fenelon Falls, by a score of 48-27.

The competition was very good and the boys showed good sportsmanship.

The two top scorers were Ian Neville with 15 points and Ivan Bain with 12.

MY VALLEY

Down in the valley
Beneath the green trees,
Flows softly and gently
A small crystal stream.
Fed by a pure spring
Far back in the hills,
It sparkles and shines
In the rays of the sun,
Cress swaying gently
When tiny fish run.
I love this green valley
And soft flowing stream,
Where peace and contentment
Reign calm and serene.

—Ann Cummins.

THE ECHO
5c PER COPY

THE
Dominion
Hotel
MINDEN
Excellent
Accommodation
for Travellers

You will like our
Dining Room Service

"The Echo"
5c a copy

TRADE IN your old furnace



- ★ Users report savings up to 33% and more on fuel
- ★ No smoke... No soot... No chimney draft required
- ★ Easy budget terms



WHITFIELD'S
PLUMBING AND HEATING
HALIBURTON 370W2

J. O. JACKSON HEATING
MINDEN 229R1

on a new
money-saving
IRON FIREMAN
CUSTOM
Mark II
OIL FURNACE
with
VoluMetric
Combustion

Greatest innovation in oil
firing in 30 years

We will give you a liberal trade-in allowance on the purchase of a new Iron Fireman CUSTOM Mark II furnace. And that's only the beginning of your savings, for many users report fuel savings of 33% and more over old-style furnaces. The reason: it generates its own combustion air supply—it starts clean and burns clean—there's no smoke, no soot and oil nozzles and ignition systems stay clean and efficient. It brings you home comfort at its best! Call or write today for free color folder and full information. No obligation.

MAPLE LAKE

Ladies from St. Peter's W.A. took part in the World Day of Prayer with the United church ladies in the Carnarvon Zion church.

We are indeed sorry to hear Mrs. Dorothy Dawson suffered a stroke on Wednesday. After several days she is showing a slight improvement.

Deepest sympathy is sent to the relatives of the late

Miss Teeny Packard, in her 73rd year. She leaves to mourn her son George with whom she lived, James, and a sister, Mrs. Herb Miller of Haliburton, Mrs. Tom Scott of West Guilford and Mrs. Jack McKnight of Allsaw.

Mrs. Milton Dawson is with Mr. and Mrs. Bill Bowers in Toronto, while Mrs. Malcolm Kennedy of Cornwall and children are at Milton Dawson's.

The township have now

employed several local men in underbrushing and road work as a winter employment program.

A correction to an error in last week's news should read Mr. and Mrs. Harold Archer attended the christening of Marie and Doug Bice's children.

Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Morrison were with Mr. and Mrs. J. Morrison on Saturday afternoon. Mr. and Mrs. H. Fountain visited with them on Wednesday last.

We are sorry to hear Jim Packard fell on the ice and cracked some ribs, also that Mrs. Blanche Linton had the misfortune to fracture her hip and is now in Lindsay hospital.

The Community Guild met at the home of Mrs. Alma Morrison on Thursday last with six members present. The next meeting will be at Mrs. Dorothy Griffin's March 16 to which a hearty invitation is extended to all ladies to attend.

St. Peter's W.A. met at the home of Mrs. Lawrence Harrison, Carnarvon, with 11 members present. The next meeting is March 8 at the home of Mrs. Carrie Morrison.

OBITUARY

Edward Allen Hughes

Edward Allan Hughes was born in the township of Minden on May 22, 1898, the youngest son of Jos. Hughes and Ellen Thompson.

He resided with the family on the farm until his enlistment for active service on May 24, 1916 in the 109th Battalion mustering in Lindsay.

He served in England and France with some distinction until discharged on May 1, 1919.

During his three years of service he earned special mention, receiving the Military Medal for bravery on the field.

After his discharge he worked in his home area in the timber industry.

In early February this year he suffered a recurrence of a serious heart condition and was admitted to the Red Cross hospital at Minden where he passed on February 7.

The funeral service was held in the Welch funeral home, Minden, conducted by the Rev. D. W. Staples, who gave a very comforting message to the bereaved.

Interment took place in the Minden cemetery.

Surviving members of the family are Mrs. John Corcoran (Nancy) of Kearney; Mrs. Fred Snell (Josephine) of Haliburton; Mrs. John Moore, (Maude) of Minden, Herbert of Niagara Falls and Mrs. Abercrombie (Mary) of Ajax.



Marconi T-V

HULBIG RADIO & TV
Sales - Service - Repairs
1/2 miles south of Minden on
Highway 121 at the
Red School
Phone 23R11, Kinmount.

D. J. STEPHENSON R.O.

O P T O M E T R I S T

EYES EXAMINED

HALIBURTON Wednesday, 1.30 p.m.

Dr. Good's Office, phone 400

M I N D E N Friday

WELL DRILLING

DIAMOND CORE DRILLING

M. A. LEIGHTON

HALIBURTON — PHONE 166J1

GERALD M. DAWSON
chartered accountant
PHONE 287
haliburton, ontario

Hyland Granite Quarries

MINDEN - ONTARIO

Suppliers of
NATURAL GRANITE STONE FACING

Masonry Services Contracted
Specializing in Homes, Fireplaces, Patios, Walls, Etc.

Commercial - Substrate
Anywhere

Telephone 20 or 249

Write Box 201, Minden, Ontario

SPORTING GOODS SALE

10% OFF all Hockey Pants, Socks, Sweaters,
Shin Pads, Elbow Pads, Shoulder Pads, Gloves.

PAINT BARGAINS

Half-Price Sale of Discontinued Colors in
KEM-GLO and SUPER KEM-TONE

See the newest colors in Super Kemtone—the Deluxe

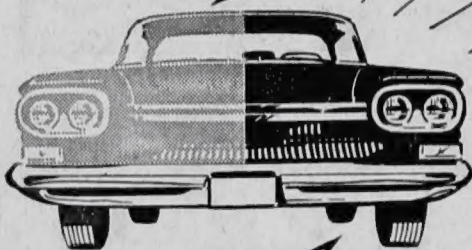
Latex Wall Paint

as well as Kem-Glo—the miracle Alkyd Enamel.
Colors designed to add fresh and unusual beauty

to your home.

Rae's Hardware

Remember how nice your car used to look?



Let us restore its showroom finish!

PAINT JOBS \$40.00 and up during February & March
We have just installed a C.I.L. paint mixer—guaranteed to match the original colour of your car. We carry a large stock of replacement panels. Fast and efficient lubrication jobs.

WARD'S AUTO BODY

SERVICE STATION — ESSO PRODUCTS
Radiator Repairs - Body and Fender Work - Duco Work
PHONE 78 MINDEN, ONT.

KINSMEN
BINGO

MINDEN CENTRE

EVERY THURSDAY

8:30 p.m.

JACKPOT \$50.00

MUST GO EACH WEEK — 20 GAMES NIGHTLY

IF YOU ARE IN THE

MARKET FOR

LUMBER,

BUILDERS' SUPPLIES

AND HARDWARE,

DON'T BUY UNTIL

YOU SEE US FIRST

